

Message Text

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ORIGIN EUR-12

INFO OCT-02 ISO-00 IO-13 DODE-00 PM-05 SS-15 CIAE-00
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DOD/ISA:WSLOCOMBE
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO USMISSION USNATO IMMEDIATE
INFO ALL NATO CAPITALS
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY HELSINKI
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (OMITTED MILITARY ADDEES)

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: NATO, MPOL, MNUC

SUBJECT: PRESS GUIDANCE ON BREZHNEV LETTER TO PRESIDENT
ON ER

1. FOLLOWING IS PRESS GUIDANCE PREPARED FOR DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN FOR NOON BRIEFING JANUARY 24. SUBJECT DID NOT RPT NOT ARISE TODAY. YOU ARE AUTHORIZED TO DRAW UPON GUIDANCE IN RESPONDING TO QUERIES ON THIS SUBJECT.

2. BEGIN GUIDANCE

Q. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, SOVIET PRESIDENT BREZHNEV HAS WRITTEN TO NATO LEADERS WARNING ABOUT THE NEUTRON BOMB. HAS PRESIDENT CARTER RECEIVED SUCH A LETTER?

A. YES, PRESIDENT CARTER RECENTLY RECEIVED SUCH A LETTER. WE ARE COMPARING NOTES AT NATO HEADQUARTERS ON THE VARIOUS LETTERS RECEIVED.

Q. WHAT DID THE LETTER SAY? WAS IT "DIRECT" AND RUDE" AS CHARACTERIZED BY EUROPEAN SOURCES?

A. THE LETTER REPEATED POSITIONS THE SOVIET UNION HAS ALREADY TAKEN PUBLICLY AGAINST PRODUCTION AND DEPLOYMENT

OF ENHANCED RADIATION WEAPONS.

Q. HAS PRESIDENT CARTER REPLIED TO THE LETTER? WHAT DOES HE PLAN TO SAY IN REPLY?

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A. THE PRESIDENT HAS NOT REPLIED TO BREZHNEV'S LETTER. AS I SAID, WE ARE CONSULTING WITH OUR ALLIES. I WOULD NOTE IN THIS CONNECTION THE COMMENT BY THE PRESIDENT IN HIS PRESS CONFERENCE IN WARSAW DECEMBER 30 THAT OTHER NUCLEAR WEAPONS RECENTLY INTRODUCED BY THE SOVIETS, SUCH AS THE SS-20, ARE DE-STABILIZING AND MUCH MORE DESTRUCTIVE THAN ENHANCED RADIATION WEAPONS WOULD BE.

Q. HAS THE PRESIDENT DECIDED TO PROCEED WITH PRODUCTION AND DEPLOYMENT OF THIS WEAPON?

A. THE PRESIDENT HAS NOT YET DECIDED THIS QUESTION. WE ARE CONTINUING OUR CONSULTATIONS WITH OUR ALLIES FOR THEIR VIEWS ON DEPLOYMENT. AS THE PRESIDENT SAID IN WARSAW, WE WOULD NOT DEPLOY ENHANCED RADIATION WEAPONS UNLESS THERE WERE AGREEMENT BY OUR NATO ALLIES.

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